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7 April 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

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I discussed this with Mr. Briggs before 1 April, explaining that we had not been able to identify any category A priorities generated by the Support Offices. When this type of priority is assigned to Support applications, it is assigned either by MSD/OCS or in the Production Division by [redacted]. Usually it is caused by some occurrence which prevents the job from being run during the night with the result that it must be carried over to the next day.

Briggs agreed that we could not follow the procedure prescribed in his memorandum but he would review category A requirements and call me on any that he considered questionable.

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[redacted]

Chief, Support Services Staff

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Bob

Category A Priority Assignments

I leafed through the January Category A & B Log maintained by the Production Control Branch/OCS. Every DDS office except OTR had at least one Category A run during the month. The reason for a job being assigned Category A is not given in the Log nor is there any other documentation that tells you why the assignment was made. I've talked to several MSD people and it appears that customer requests for a fast turnaround, are at a minimum - at least for DDS customers. Occasionally, a special request will take longer than anticipated and end up in a series of Category A runs to meet the dead line. PERCON is a recent example, also special requests written in 501 code use Category A to get debug time on the Spectra 70. I understand that this is the simplest way to break into the Spectra operating system to get a debug shot.

This doesn't mean that the office asked for Category A

This is misleading Category C is a fast turnaround category (it doesn't work either) Category A for Prime time (8-530)

frequently

Nobody says so but I gather that significant part of the Category A problem is inside the Production Division. Hardware, software and I suppose, operator problems create back logs and some of this backlog, originally Category B,C, D or E becomes Category A. SANCA is apparently a recurring example of this kind of problem. SANCA is a Category B job - with an over night update (this is not the SANCA query system).

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If the update doesn't go for one reason or another it becomes a Category A the next day.

primary
No one has any advice on how Office or Division Chiefs or even, for that matter Directorate IPC's can solve this problem. The need for Category A time is detected in OCS. / This instruction from Briggs will mean that the need will have to be surfaced at the Office or Division in the Directorate, talked about and so forth, and signed. Since several Category A's might crop up at the same time the request will have to go to the Directorate because Office or Division Chiefs won't be aware of competing requests. Unless the Directorate has established a fairly rigid priority system there will be some difficulty in deciding how to order the competitive Category A's. In the mean time customer deadlines have come and gone.

The more likely prospect is that Category B (a request for "Block time") will become the critical category. Category B will become a problem, ^{like Category A} and Category C will crop up as critical.

In the end we will do away with the whole category business and have jousting tournaments for machine time (not dissimilar to the way 501 time was allocated).

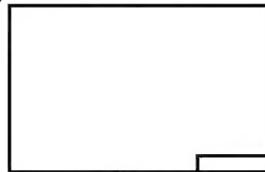
It's easy to sit on the outside and criticize and second guess this problem.

One solution seems to be to dedicate the hardware, software and operators to classes for customer; Scientific;

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Intelligence Production, Support, etc. I'm not sure that this isn't the only solution to the problem.



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After writing this I learned that ^{Category} ~~Category~~ assigns ~~himself~~ A time on his own priority arrangement. This removes the problem from the people who could do most to solve it.

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